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The cover of this issue is by Dorothy Dewey Anderson

EDITORS

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Editor's Note

In these war days, permeated too often with intellectual sterility and haphazard belief in advertised virtues, literature finds itself searching feverishly for health, a type of health which will combat much of the needless eccentricity, which followed the debacle of twenty-five years ago.

Unfortunately, some artists still persist in refusing to join the human race. They find their entire *primum mobile* within their art. Some of them have said that they will build a creation within a chaos, unmindful of the fact that they are lucky to have even a chaos in which to paint their putrescent picture of the human animal. To refute people is sometimes good. At times it is even noble. However, too often, too many artists do not refute. They simply repulse. Most of them give themselves away in this manner. A study of the successful ones in their number reveals, in the end an omnipresent love for the humanity which impels the artistic act. The best contemporary example is Henry Miller, whose work (in spite of what Mr. Miller can do about it) daily exerts a more profound influence on our culture.

INTERIM agrees that in the long run a war, any war, is a temporary value of dreadful and tragic proportions. But wars are made and fought by people, and it is in people and in a world of people that we look for permanent values. Permanent values make a lasting literature.

Therefore, this second number of INTERIM is devoted for the most part to World War II. It contains many different attitudes on the part of many different writers toward this conflict. In these attitudes may be found issues, which cannot be skirted, if we are to maintain the literary heritage of permanent values, which has been left to us and is being left to us—in our own country with our own ink—and in our brother countries with our own blood.

A. W. S.

WARREN d'AZEVEDO–Pier

It was a pierhead jump. I had been knocking around town. Just watching people on the streets, getting lost in a few old bookstores, drinking too many beers in a couple of bars, and somehow ending up with the last encores of a local symphony. A typical sort of night for me, I suppose, between trips in a city where I don't know anyone. I could have picked something up. But I didn't. Not every night a falconeyed barfly or a pretty greek I don't.

When I got back to the hotel the tired goodlooking girl at the desk said there was a message. Call the union hall or the dispatcher's home. Too late for the hall so I called Joe. I had an idea what was up. Keep ringing Central. Probably asleep. The familiar click and Joe's voice. My nickel rattled down inside the phonebox. Joe? *Yeah.* Hello Joe. Got the note. Just now. What? Shop? What ship? You drunk? And me not even broke yet!

A ship if I wanted it. All loaded, battened down and ready to pull out in an hour. No, he didn't know where in hell she was going. Offshore? Sure, any place. Maybe India, maybe Australia, the East Coast, the Mediterranean, Montana, Siberia . . . maybe Mars. Would I take her? Got to find a sailor fast.

Would I take her? Why not. I was giving Joe a bad time. The thing to do. Let the piecards at the hall think you are doing them a favor. Why not. I had a bellyfull of streets and beer and faces and hotels and crowds of bodies. Always the looking for something, something like home and the first time. All those bodies passing on streets and they cannot be slept with at once. Two weeks of it. A white sterile busy town. And me with too much sex from last trip. I had a bellyfull.

Pierhead jump. Know what that means? It means getting out fast and going mad a little. No time to let anybody know. The folks at home gave up long ago. Home. Where's that? Three states away? No no, far away far away. *Oh where is the wandering boy tonight* And the wife. She should be reckoned. Over the hills and far away she is. Crosscountry. And the kid. The small glistening thing in her a-coming and a-coming. Christ! Where's home? A place to go maybe. No no, a place to live. Hell! What's to live? To live is to move *now.* Move fast. But they should be reckoned. They should be. Does she know how I think sometimes she *should* be? Is where she is home? I reckon. No no, this is it. To move fast. Get out. Go. Leave everything as is. And all the others? Forget them. No time to let anybody know. Good. Drunk. Forget. The dock. Ship. The green water. Clean. Escape.

Pull out the bureau drawers. Pile everything in a heap by the brass bed. Sort it out. The sailing gear goes anywhichway into the canvas bag. The suit you got on, the shoes, the soiled shirt . . . they go in the brown leather satchel. The books. What about them? *The American Merchant Marine, Mardi, A New Model of the Universe, A Narrative of a Voyage Round the World, The Holy Bible, Celestial Navigation, The Odyssey, Witchcraft, The Equinox, The Plumed Serpent, Democratic Vistas, Guadal-*

canal Dairy, Antic Hay. Into the canvas bag. Sure. Why not. For the quiet time. The opium time in a bunk. The sedentary kind of dying.

Don't forget the key. Under the bed there. A tie. A red tie. Not mine it isn't. And the comb on the dresser . . . and hairpins. *Among my souvenirs* There's a song. Christ! All set. Get out. The key. The bags. And down three flights. She is there still. Wait until she is through at the switchboard. Now. Give her the key. Say you are pulling out. Yes right now tonight. Sure you can see it in her eyes how romantic it must be. Ask her to hold your mail. You may be back. O god for another night. The bait. So easy to dig worms. Leave the brown satchel too. And the crosscountry address. Just in case not back in six months. O god. Goodlooking and tired and so damned interested. One of our boys. Down to the sea. Maybe never come back. One of our unsung heroes . . .

Then the flourish before the curtain. Give it all you got. Toss the canvas bag to your shoulder and push through the swingingdoor to the street. The dark street and people passing in the shadows. Walk like a sailor. Feel like a sailor. On your way. Not one of them anymore again. Sure a sailor can feel like a sailor sometimes. That's the only thing that makes it more than a job. Not one of them anymore. Off to sea. Like a holyman purging in the wilderness. To become an honester friend, a stranger to them on the mystic sea. To become clean and holy and stranger to them. The sea. Sea. What is the sea? They don't know that even. They can never know. Only I know. A sailor only can know. Because he works on it, against it, sees himself and all his gods swimming in it, does a turn of his existence on it, is a man without women on it, and hates it with a sort of hate which draws the blessed and the damned like moths . . . Sure. Walk like a sailor. Feel like a sailor. There's a dignity to it unexplained. They feel it, they see it as you pass by. No matter where. Drunk as Jesus on mainstreet. Singing Ring Dang Doo in the graveyard. Running ballsarse naked from a frigshamble. The catparty in Room 69. Anywhere. Anywhere. The restaurant. The concert. The bar. The bookstore. They can see it, feel it sure and smell it even. The way you wear your clothes and know you are a sailor. Anybody who's been any time to sea has it. That wizard Carlson, any able seaman, any oldtime mate. And the fruitiest steward, the most slugnutty wiper. But cut the melodrama. Shake a leg. Forty minutes to get there. The ship. That ship.

Taxi! The yellowcab pulled to the curb. Good customer. Sailor. Don't count the change. Whereto? I couldn't remember the number of the dock. What did Joe say? Wherethehell? Maybe 42 or 43. Way out though. Under the bridge. They say it is the longest dock in the world. You know. Out of town a way. Way out. Under the bridge I think.

It was a long spin through the town. A long twisting spin down the leaning rows of lampposts. Intersections. Red Green Stop Go Down the converging glitter, the bright rivers of lights. Wheeling through the small eddies of crowds. Those faces. Every one remembered as pasted on the instant posture of a head. Arms and legs suspended for an instant in some random mime of rapture. Everywhere the uniforms of wars denoting how and with what others one kills, is killed, longs for a happiness of sorts and plunges into the bur-

lesque, the special incognito of crowds. So young. So young among the old who must linger and watch and pass with stone eyes rolling like marbles in their heads.

Those navymen in blue. The color for boy. From the midwest most of them. And Tennessee. Mississippi. And Carolina. Herded down to shorecities. Big cities. Webbed and litup and flowing cities. Down and out and into the sea. Laughing through the sideshow mirrors of their great expectations. Laugh and the world laughs with you boys. Whoever dreamed up that uniform knew the score. It's all male now. The great plumed strut. And the women in their tight sweaters and skirts walking in pairs through the blue. That cabaret. The evil sweet music of metal horns. The blue and the pink dancing with easy lowdown grace. And always the stone eyes passing and remembering other times like these times. But they are only passing. Only passing by or sitting at a bar with nineteen-18 discharge papers or giving directions on a streetcorner or playing mother and father in some bed three flights up. See the old girls in furs and rosy powder. It's a male time sure. Time to assert and crow and flaunt somehow the muscular arses and uniformed thighs row on row. Laugh boys laugh and talk of distant things and places. How the world is just a round old udder of beer. How things should be and how paper poppies grow between those strong young legs.

Down the lonesome river of streets. The dead darkened buildings now. The glow from livingroom windows and suburban houses. Baby fast asleep and the radio and the newspaper. What's new chum? What's new in the friendly old universe? How are things down on the farm? Have you seen gay Paree? What's new in Washington London Moscow, in the Vatican Lhasa Savannah Boston Benin, on Jupiter's third largest moon? Solong chum. No time to listen. Down the lonesome river. The wharves. Warehouses. Waterfront. The sticks of masts probing the night. The big dark ships moving out. The wail of the monsters sliding out on the bay with all the living secrets blackedout inside. Turn left. Under the bridge. The high shadow of the bridge. The gate. The watchman. Stop. Give the driver his two dollars. Good luck. Thanks. The gate. Show the pass. The dock. The long dock.

I think that was the longest walk I ever did take. The seabag got heavier every step and the watchman said the ship was down to the very end of the pier. I figured, should have left the books behind. Sure the books. Books. Someone else's meager order out of chaos. Each a bound and titled universe full of someone's reported lies or hallucinations or will to die or to live or to create some more amicable zodiac under which to play, stud, open wide their secret hearts, name or not name what is pleasurable or not pleasurable to them. Books. Packing them on my own back among the old dungarees and boots and cargohooks and the good things that go to do a man's work. Books. And me with unwritten volumes in my head, the pages scattered like last August's leaves all over hell in there waiting to be sorted, annotated, purged, amplified, burned, written afresh and of course bound into my own precious vision of the Firmament. Something to hold in the hand, for someone else to pack on his back. Books. Taking books to sea. I could stand a lookout thirty years straight and not get filed all the litter in the gutters of

my skull. And now these neat little universes heavy in my bag, creasing my back. A pinch of salt and mix well. Watch the dough rise.

But the pier. And the ship. There were a lot of ships tied up along the way. Loading and unloading. Each in a pool of white light. Each in a puddle of familiar noises. The rumble of winches and the many hard sounds of men working on metal ships. Zircon flashes from welders' torches pierced into the cold night and I could see them alternating down to the end the far end of the pier. God I swear it was good. Good to be walking fast like that to meet a ship. A great steel ship all loaded for anyplace. Anyplace! It is good to be walking fast down a strange long pier with the clothes on in which you have worked as hard as you ever could with your body. With everything you need to live by packed in a bag on your back. It is good how clear you can think on a cold night walking fast away. Walking fast away. Is that it? Those two fellows walking fast ahead of me. Sailing on my ship? What about my partner? The first time without him for three trips. Going to miss him. Be lost without him for a few days. Someone to talk to who works with you and knows all the angles of your special way of handling a job. You learn to need and even to love someone like that. Seldom see him in port. A different person out at sea. It's that way. Men become more than men when they are away. Fast away. Is that it sure? Away from what you think you want most, what everyone thinks he wants most in all the world. Do they find it in the safe press of those crowds, at the fireside, in the parks and streets and hollow cliffs of towns? I wonder if they find it in the summer lanes, the cozy farms or sunflower gardens of villages. Only on deserts I think. Only on moors and bare mountains and seaspaces. There perhaps they might find it. It. But what? Find peace? time? company? Yes perhaps peace and all maybe. Maybe to furnish some desolate expanse with the ever present and new remembered universe within. Until when the whole world which was desert is peopled by those more than living creatures like in dreams. Maybeso. But walk fast. Shift the seabag. Don't break the pace. The spell. Fast away.

Down the long pier. The hoarse shouts of men. The ships. More ships than I had ever seen at one dock. The booms were winged out like arms. Each ship busy like a beetle on its back. Crates and piles of stuffs in the dim sheds. Fourwheelers rumbling behind wheezing jitneys. Watchit! Look sharp! Easy! Better go around there! Cargoloads jerking and swinging up over and down into the dank holds. Deep stowed. Deep in the swollen bellies of ships. So many cargoes loading and unloading everywhere. To and from everywhere . . . cotton steel apples ammunition whiskey barbed-wire clothing guns trucks gasoline flyingmachines cigarettes canned-foods men wool frozenmeats oil copperingots tools beer paper water. To and from everywhere in the world. From factories and farm-lands. To cities and armies. To great rotting piles on the lonely beaches of the world.

Cargoes. Loadings. Unloadings. The business, the confusion and somehow integrating energies of all the single brains of millions. The busy digits and limbs and minute curling inards of all the colonied moulds of earthlings. The rules, the nerve centers, the transfer and exchange by

streets and lanes and highways and airways, over seas and lands, through the whole swarming glut of two billion fleshes and their needs and their fears and their dying and their spawning. Walk fast as you can with a load on your back. Down the long dock. Fast away. To think on it more is to know how each single mind is a long pier, a river, a street with ships and twolegged kin and all manner of vehicles moving in never ceasing traffic to and fro and from it. Fast away with your own strange cargo stowed fast away, stowed anywhichway into the dark corners of your skull.

Another voyage. Another ship and the opiate musing days. But what to do with the general cargoes of the mind? That haphazard stowing every instant in the mind. The littered hoard must be checked and doublechecked. Always the eyes like twin hatches . . . well, as it were . . . taking in, sucking in. And the mouth like a ship's steamwhistle sounding off arrivals and departures only. To and from compendious oceans as it were. As it were. Whereas nothing! Doublecheck. Why doublecross or doubletalk onward? *As it is* Leave off! AS IT IS, gentlemen we have a good many things to consider. SILENCE! Mr. Chairman I move this meeting be adjourned until nineteen-99 of this century. Sitdown! SILENCE! Jesus Christ, gents, let's look at the facts in the face. Let's look at things *as they are*. You with the baldpate. Take down your hair. You of the byronic tresses. Rend your other cheek. Let's all play pussinthecorner with the tenth Muse. This is a smoker, gents, not a well of loneliness. She does a bubble dance on cue, plays piggywentomarket in the punchbowl. Now whisper in her ear. How many maidenheads can stand on the point of a PIN? How many piers to make a ploughman? Christ crist keeerist! Cargoes. Well away. She's off. Standby my lads. Fast away!

But words are no escape. We are not away. The work is not done. The cargoes are not designated and stowed for safe voyaging. Easy. Easy does it. Do not venture into that desert sea too soon.

The cargoes shifting around in the gut always. As long as you can remember. No and you can't grunt them out. I cannot forget how I had felt after the concert that night. Coming down out of the galleries. How I felt moving through the lobby among the quiet and welldressed people. Then ejected into the street to remember the exciting moment, the preliminary dissonance of an orchestra. Is that it? The melancholy. Fast away. Is that it sure? What was wanted there to hold always? Was there something buried there to remain with or to take away? No. Not to be taken away but remembered and longed for. Something to escape fast away. Like home maybe. *Home* A thought too big for the word. More than what Ulysses found at last. I mean the home which is in all things desired. That place to go besides hell. Not lingering youth nor a remembered lullaby alone (for, christ, that's some small part of it), but a place, a house invented only for to rest at times and to be furnished of the trophies sorted from all the unstowed cargoes. A place for a tired sailor more weary than children could be dreamed among their toys. I mean someplace to be builded in the moors, the deserts of the soul. I mean peace in the soul. And only strong men who are weary enough and wise enough can build it there. For it is not there until it is made to be. And it must be made alone. Is that it then? Fast away to seek

that part of one's self glimpsed in an instant loneliness? That vision which keeps some men drunk and to sea until they are dead? Only to some is it safe to sea.

And the woman afar crosscountry. I think of her always and some how. Not waiting I hope. Though well she might wait for me to come home. There is nothing here for her until a certain victory in the wilderness is dreamed. Until the flesh is clean again and all the wars are won and lost. After the wars. After. After all the glorious and wallowing rut among too many kin. The time of incest and pursuit to death. After this. After the rutting and the purging of one's own flesh among that millions. After this time is the brief hope of visions. A hope of a fertile growing time between. The hope glimpesd in an instant loneliness. Of drawing in. Of knowing what is loved. Of peace.

It was then I caught sight of my ship low in the water and steam up. As long as I live I shall not forget walking fast down that pier to meet that ship. I didn't give a dam how heavy was my seabag anymore or about anything anymore. There was the ship, steam up, poised, well stowed and ready. I tell you it was a good sight. I felt fine. Cargoes? That other cargo? Well this is how I see it. I think I figured it all at once. God said to Moses lift up your rod and command the sea to part. Well I had one hand in my pocket and my other hand holding on to everything I cared to own, and I knew from the looks of her that ship was going to make white water through that sea. There would be plenty of watches to stand and enough time to think things out. I wanted that trip to be a long one so I could stow it all away right. Sure. And all the flotsam sucked in by the eyes.

That's all. I said I didn't give a damn about all this anymore. And it was true. There was the end of the pier. The ship all ready to go. God it was a good sight. A ship. Down to the sea again. Out to the clean empty sea. And then other shores of other lands. The show. The big show. God it was good. A ship. A great steel fish spewing a jet of steam. All ready. Steam up.

I stood at the foot of the gangplank for a moment to look her over. A fine ship. Low in the water but well up at the bow. She could use a little paint on the hull. But a fine ship. The crew was fore and aft already singling up the mooringlines. Some of them fair drunk and talking about the town. Young fellows most of them and a few old boys. They looked OK. Whereto? Whatnow? Anywhere. Anyplace. Just pull out. Out to sea. Fast away.

Go on. Up the plank. Don't look back or you make like a weak sister, a queer salt. Into the warm passageway. Find a focsle. All so familiar. The stink of the galley. Dungarees and oilskins hung on hooks. The one unmade bunk. The good strong smell of where men sleep and their work. Toss the bag on the bunk. Rub the shoulder. Now. Out on deck. Give the boys a hand. Up with the plank. Wing in the boom. Fore and aft. Gun the windlass. Take in the lines . . . offshore, springer, inshore. Stow them well below. Smooth work. A good gang. Easygoing fellows and not too much talk. Done.

Time to look back at last. Back there, far back along the wake was the pier. The long pier under the bridge. The pier with all the busy ships and

their clustered lights strung out all along it. The pier. Stuck out like a finger, like a pricker from the shorecity. Like the maleparts of the coastland. The shining pier thrust out into the bay. Discharging cargoes. All conceivable things. Flashing and shining back there in the night. There on the black restless water which is ever lapping its tongues among the rotted pilings, along the draining beaches, reeking sharp like sperm. But the ship. We are fast away. Embarked onto a vast space. A long deep shriek of the whistle and we are away to sea. The throb of her engines comes up through my feet. She's alive and away. Sure. I took up my rod and commanded the sea to part. We were splitting dark green water now. I stood with my hands in my pockets for a while watching the lights smear in the fog. Then I went below for coffee.

ROSAMUND DARGAN THOMSON—
And Become as Little Children:

desirous,
wanting to the point of pain
plain things for their wonder, small ones for love,
and all this want a magnificence
of the heart;
untried and singing,
proud of splendor, wild for light again,
ready for quaint golden surprises
momently (this quickness
being the only health of the heart);

believing
nakedly; wont to gain
kingdoms at a stroke and such a goodness—
color of love, color of morning—
as is untold, unknown and ghostly
to the proper heart.

Three War Poems

INGEBORG KAYKO—The Young Men Say:

Now we expend ourselves upon the earth,
we who are seed and who shall never reap.
What do we know about the world's great worth,
though we entrust to it our lives to keep,
our unlived lives that only will be sleep
beneath the grass and water and the sands
whereon we sow ourselves with our own hands
that there may be on earth less cause to weep?
We cannot ask the cost. No man does more.
Let us believe that we are not too dear,
let us forget, with all our evening near,
that men while they are men will always war,
and that young men will after us go forth
for the world's sake, whatever the world's worth.

WARDELL R. MacKAY—Graveyard at Beja

Let us have silence here: no minted praise
Cast in new silver shall suffice,
No old world words, no time dishonored phrase
Shall fix the meaning of this sacrifice
In crosses, poppies, and a bordered walk;
Nor sorrow yet, although these men are dead,
Nor pity, no, nor poetry shall talk
Another lovely bitterness. Each head
Is patient underground. Anger and hate!
Rounded and pointed as a soaring shell,
Fire-wrapped and awful as the woundeds' cries . . .
Then peace, and steady prose. Then wear and tell
Your sorrow, and at that morning gate
Honor the ones who gave their eyes.

MARY GRAHAM LUND—*This War Is For*

This war is for the young who saw too far
And tried to ride time's horses down the wind,
Grasping at magic until they recognized
Carrousel music and stopped at last, chagrinned.

This war is for the old whose dreams had grown
Too bitter with defeat for seemly sleeping,
The old who blamed themselves that the bright world
Had broken while they had it in their keeping.

Now youth can ride the sky with swooping laughter,
While old hands use old skills to keep them safe;
Now youth can chase the glowing flies of hope,
While old hearts break the webs at which they chafe.

For life, not death, is the sadistic master
Who traps the soul in fear's or passion's cell,
And freedom must be won again whenever
The watchers on the ramparts sleep too well.

MELVIN RADER–
Human Values in an Age of Technology

The conflict between men and machines is both a cause and a symptom of the present crisis. This conflict arises when technology, developing more swiftly than the forms of social control, turns against its human creators and subjugates them. In the words of Emerson,

> *Things are in the saddle*
> *And ride mankind.*

Men become enslaved to machines and money, and things take on life and dominate human beings. Thus there is a twofold inversion of values: the dehumanization and depersonalization of mankind, and the attribution of social relationships and spiritual properties to material objects.

In the mechanized industries of capitalist civilization, ordinary workers sell their labor power and are handled as commodities; they work under a routinized system of a minute division of labor, which utilizes and develops only a fraction of their potentialities. So far as they are concerned, the industrial process is superficial, repetitive, boresome: the only skills required by their jobs are peripheral to their personalities, different from the integral creativity and love of workmanship displayed by the hand craftsmen of earlier times. Hence the modern worker does not realize himself, does not fulfill his *own* ends: he is used as a tool by others . His work is not the immediate satisfaction of a need, but only the means for the satisfaction of extraneous wants.

Still more dehumanizing is the unemployment and poverty, the waste and decay of manpower, which results when machines compete against human beings, cast them out of work and thereby impoverish them. The hunger, cold, and illness, the sense of injustice and futility, the demoralization of subsisting upon a dole, are a fundamental negation of a man's dignity and worth.

Even the wealthy are perverted and dehumanized by this system. Their absorption in money-making, business in itself, production of goods *per se*, their obsessive devotion to mammoth, inhuman, impersonal corporations, stultifies their personalities, robs them of the warmth, intimacy, and careless rapture of spontaneous life-fulfillment. As R. H. Tawney has said, the "money maker," who neglects the ends of life in his feverish preoccupation with the monetary means, is "like a hypochondriac who is so absorbed in the processes of his own digestion that he goes to his grave before he has begun to live." Indeed, our whole civilization has acquired this taint: it is an "acquisitive society" in which the cash nexus has in great measure replaced the creative impulses and the essentially human relations.

If men are thus money-ridden and machine-dominated, it is because inanimate objects have taken on the qualities of persons. Men produce commodities, give them economic value as the result of their labor; but the commodities, once produced, rule the producers instead of being ruled by them. They appear as independent beings endowed with life, and enter into relations both with

one another and the human race. In consequence, the economic system begins to run wild, driving men into and out of employment, dragging them through cycles of prosperity and depression, casting them into the black hell of war. Nobody intends, plans, or organizes these developments. Not even men like Hitler have willed what has come to pass. The major events have been produced by the merciless anonymity, the cold collectivity of machines.

The tyranny of industrial processes is intensified by the superstitious attitude which men assume toward economic commodities. The values of these commodities, which they possess only through their relations to persons, seem to be intrinsic properties exchanging on the market in terms of their fixed, objective worth. A diamond, for example, seems *intrinsically* very valuable, whereas it would be as cheap as coal if it required as little labor to produce it. Hence the human content of economic values becomes obscured; the object which labor produces becomes an alien force independent of its producer; the economic process becomes depersonalized and heartless. Men forget the prime truth expressed by Ruskin that "the only wealth is life;" and, consequently, the machinery of our civilization grinds out death more abundantly than any other commodity.

Total, mechanized, global warfare is the most brutal expression of the twofold inversion of values: the stultification of life into a material force and the endowment of material forces with obstreperous life. Since the time of Napoleon, war has become progressively mechanized: in many respects, the best army is like a flawless machine. The soldiers, clad in uniforms, drilled into automatic responses, treated as means and not as ends, put into motion by external commands, are typical products of standardization and mass production: they are military equivalents of the factory robots. Not until World War II were these tendencies carried to the most sinister extremes: when the technological aspects of war at last decisively outweighed the human aspects. As Erich Kahler, in *Man the Measure*, has pointed out, in the battles of this global war "men are chained to machines in punctiliously geared, collective operations of which no single individual can see the whole, operations from which there is no escape and in which men are, in fact, no more than matériel."

Among the more advanced "intellectuals," there has even been a tendency to glorify the reduction of human nature to the lethal machine. Ernst Juenger, one of the most influential of recent German writers, has carried such attitudes to the last point of nihilism. Technics and ethics have become for him synonymous, and he regards sympathy, the sense of human dignity, the desire for happiness, as luxuries no one can afford in an age of mechanization and total warfare. Men are to be regarded as on a par with machines, governed by the laws of technics, and expended with the precise calculation employed in the firing of shells.*

In politics, the most extreme expression of this process of dehumanization has been the *"Gleichschaltung"* of fascist regimentation: the deliberate extermination of every tendency toward spontaneous thought and autonomous action, the treatment of human beings as products to be turned out *en masse* upon a social assembly-line: cut and trimmed and patterned according to the latest blue prints of the Ministry of Propaganda. As if it were a grim satire,

*For an interesting account of Juenger see Kahler's remarkable book, Man the Measure.

the fascist state is but the exaggeration of common tendencies in our civilization: the mass-hypnosis of propaganda and commercial advertising, the cunning manipulation of men's minds and wills by the "political machine," the mental treadmill of the overgrown bureaucracy whether it be within a governmental office or an industrial corporation.

These aspects of our civilization have profoundly influenced man's *Weltanschauung*: his fundamental attitude and world-view. As early as the Seventeenth Century, man had become conscious of his alienation from nature. Descartes drove an ideological wedge between the human being, with all his subjective reactions, and the material world, which he described as the purely neutral sphere of physics, without color, fragrance, beauty, or purposiveness. The universe, when thus broken into the "subjective" realm of thought and values and the objective real of "extension," was like Humpty Dumpty after his fall: all the theologians and all the philosophers could not put it together again.

In recent years, however, man's self-alienation from the world has become even more profound and inclusive: the very products of his own intelligence, the human artifacts, have become inhuman: the relations of men to machines outweighs the relations of men to men. Under these circumstances, man himself becomes mechanized and dehumanized; and the image of robot man is faithfully reflected in contemporary philosophy and psychology. Modern behaviourism, with its account of the human being as "a stimulus-response mechanism," for example, is the ideological equivalent of the assembly line and the fascist state, with their systematic extermination of every tendency toward autonomy, spontaneity, freedom.

Art, the most sensitive register of life's changing moods, has repeatedly expressed the tragic paradox of man's self-alienation in a world of his own making. This theme is embodied in the sculpture of Rudolf Belling: strange, semi-abstract, machine-like forms, half-human and half-mechanical. It is expressed in the paintings of Giorgio de Chirico or Fernand Leger: organic forms transposed into inorganic shapes and relations: the human and the non-human confounded. Or in music we find it in Arthur Hoenneger's *Pacific 231*: a paen to crude, overwhelming mechanical power and the forces let loose by it within the soul. Or we discover it in Aldous Huxley's *This Brave New World* and Karel Capek's *R.U.R.* satirical fantasies in which the mechanical has become murderously encrusted upon the living, in which the machine has usurped the prerogatives of man. Or again we find it expressed in the strange fables of Franz Kafka, in which God and the whole universe are symbolically represented as intricate mechanisms and inhuman bureaucracies. Or we find it projected in the early poetry of T. S. Eliot, lyrics of despair in which "hollow men, stuffed men" are buffeted violently about in the "waste land" of industrial civilization. Again, we find the same tendency reflected in the esthetic theories of T. E. Hulme and Jose Ortega y Gassett, critics who believe that the fundamental motive of modern art is to break its vital aspect, to dehumanize it, because of a deep disgust with "the human, all too human."

If a good deal of modern art is thus preoccupied with dehumanization, it is but a sign of the predicament of the artist in the modern world. Art is

above all the sphere of creativity, personality, spontaneity. more than any other aspect of our culture, it has suffered from the depersonalization and mechanical rationalization of an industrial age. In so far as the arts have flourished and have become truly popular, they have tended to become mechnized: the radio, the movie, the "funny paper," the tabloid, and the commercial advertisement supply the ordinary city-dweller with substitutes for creative experience: with amusement in place of real art, with passive response to mass stimuli instead of active personal participation and the joy of craftsmanship.

The suffering of the individual artist, in an environment in which he feels alien, has been intensified by his precarious economic status: serious works of art, in a commercialized civilization, rarely bring a price sufficient to sustain the life of their creator. If our civilization cared deeply for beauty, personality, and the free range of the imaginative life, the artist would not be in this predicament: it is because we are obsessed by mechanical techniques as opposed to living values, because we are stone-blind to the importance of art and esthetic experience in the nation's life, that the non-commercial artist has become a miserable pensioner upon a system that consumes vast treasures in war and waste.

Individuals and groups react differently to this conflict between technology and human values. On the whole, the fascists have accepted the dehumanization of man: the nihilism that springs from the substitution of technics for values: "the standardization of souls." But there is a curious duality even here: a combination of technology and mechanical rationalization with mad irrationality. In so far as they have revolted against the dehumanizing processes of technology, the fascists have combatted the mechanical, not by exalting the human, but the subhuman, the beast. The distinctively human traits in man—his rationality, humanitarianism, democracy—are conceived to be the source of evil, a weakening and debilitating of vital instincts. Nietzsche is the great prophet of this "transvaluation": he joyously forecast "the barbarians of the twentieth century," and declared that "the savage in every one of us" must be accepted, "even the wild animal . . . A ruling race can grow up only from terrible and violent beginnings." Oswald Spengler, who considered Nietzsche his forerunner and master, likewise recognized the devitalizing effect of mechanization, and sought escape in a new age of blood and iron: the only "creative" possibility, he tells us, that remains open in our "dying" Western civilization. He announced that man is a "beast of prey," despised "the toothless feeling of sympathy and reconciliation," and boasted that Germans have at last recovered "the ability to hate." In milder form, a similar reaction to technology can be traced in a number of English-speaking authors. In Jeffers, Hemingway, and D. H. Lawrence, for example, there are kindred indications of the cult of death, primitivism, Dionysiac abandon, escape into the subhuman.

The attempt to get back to the animal roots of life is bound to fail. Indeed, the very nature of animals is misconceived by Nietzsche and Spengler. Animals are violent but they are also placid: they kill, but they also live by mutual aid. Those who have known and loved animals, such as Francis of Assisi and W. H. Hudson, have discovered a great deal in them besides carnivorousness

and ferocity. The defenders of the "beast of prey," who see nature exclusively as "red with tooth and claw," are interpreting all life in terms of their own predatory impulses. When men seek the level of the bestial, they fall below the beast. When they strip off the human, they reach the sub-animal level, the stage of nihilism, the inhumanity of the uncontrolled machine or the antihumanity of a diabolical sadism.

Likewise, the attempt of many individuals to escape into the trans-human, the supernatural, is bound to fail. The revival of supernaturalism becomes more anachronistic and illogical with every advance in our scientific understanding of man and the universe. Inevitably, a human being is the child of nature, and the earth, far from being alien to him, is the spring of all his life and hope. It is here that he finds his happiness or not at all. Moreover, to direct his aspiration toward some theological abstraction, "pinnacled dim in the intense inane," is to divert him from the terribly urgent tasks at hand.

We need something different, therefore, from escapism, whether the attempted escape be into animalism or supernaturalism. We must find salvation, not by scorning human nature, but by giving it a new expression, a higher level of realization. Above all, what is required is man's complete, conscious return to himself, his full acceptance of his humanity. Under a planned economy for social benefit, men must regain mastery over the products of their labor. The fetichism of machines and economic processes, and the consequent self-alienation of human life, must be replaced by the sovereignty of mankind.

Out of the brains of scientists and engineers have sprung millions of machines with billions of horsepower. Because this prodigious energy has not yet been mastered, we have war, revolution, economic chaos. Nevertheless, technology, if rightly employed, can eliminate poverty and the exploitation of man by man. It can bind all parts of the world together by transit and communication, and thus create the indispensable basis of a universal community. Our machines, therefore, are too wonderful, productive, indispensable for us ever to destroy them. But we must have the will to conquer these mechanical monsters that are running amuck, running wild. *This* is the great adventure of our age—to master the unlimited potentialities of science and technology: the boldest, the most exhilarating, the most promising and dangerous adventure that ever challenged the spirit and intelligence of man.

If we are to achieve such mastery, we must regulate and curb the extreme specialization of mental and physical development characteristic of our technology and industry: we must realize that all work and wealth find their end and justification in the many-sided cultivation of personality. We must achieve a larger scope for play and art and love and laughter, for creative thought and the pride of workmanship, for the cultivation of life in all its sparkle and diversity. We must treat human beings as human beings, and things as things.

The solution of the conflict is to be found in a union of "opposites": not a rejection of either humanism or technology, but their creative fusion, each functioning in its own proper way: life the master, the machine the tool.

ELLIS FOOTE—Hanford

1

Even the coyotes run like hell.
Winds yell
And lawyers quibble
In the matter of ownership.

That very considerable dribble,
Ancient of rattlers, sea-seeking
Columbia, marks how Canadian mountains are leaking
To their loss, our lights,—
Establishes a boundary for these nights.

Life these next to latest moves
Has moored me to a cottonwood,
Blown fluff in my blood,
Bewildered my loves,—
At latest has ebbed me from any steeple
Here among people.

I mean the people.—
My life reeks of the people.

I am an inscription that men bandy,
Saying, Okies, Arkies,—don't eat the candy.
I have read their rimes, heard their songs;
Have lived them all:

Oh, if I can't have any canteen beer
Then fill my belly with mess-hall steer;
If a Kansas bastard has ate my share
Then beat his bottom like the old gray mare.

Here I sit all broken-hearted—
My life belongs on a latrine wall.

The dog's philosophy permeates my poetry.

2

Planned Hanford is a wartime town
Of nearly CENSORED souls that will go down
Among the ordure of an age
Beneath the litter of sand and sage.

Oh, if I can't have me a girl to shine,
Then fill my bed with a clean old man.

Sufficient now if men have got
A logic longer than the streets of snot;
And if their logic will prevent
Their going where their brothers went.

If an Alabama bastard has already got 'im
Then pull your pistol out and pot 'im.

3

Sufficient now if what they do
Will build a magic rug or two,—

If his tail turns rubber, put it on a plate;
'Twill make the worst mutton that you ever ate!
If his blood runs brown, pour it in a cup;
'Twill make the worst beer that you ever drank up!

And maybe bring their brothers back
To help hold up an empty sack.

4

Why does the love—
Ly in loneliness dove
His sob and three sighs
When the killdeer cries?

The blatant urging
Of a post-historic breeze
Is surging
On the cobbled seas.

Washing down the world,
This tide has swirled
In unconscionable fountain
Its feet from under the mountain.

5

Almost nothing is so.—

I see forgotten people go,
Not out of the past but out
Of the marching-toward-us-future in a rout
Of now, saying,
Let the low winds blow,

The trinkets go,—
Then tinkle in the wind, the wind blow—
Nothing now is so.

MERLE MASSAR—A B C's

(An excerpt from an unfinished novel entitled SO BE IT)

The "ABC's" are important. There are some points that I must include now that are just that simple and yet that important. Indeed, they seem so important to me that I'm taking this opportunity (without asking leave) to say some of the things that are on my mind, have come to my notice as I've written this much of Dale's history.

Dale, designed as an individual, strikingly so, yet designed also to be a fine representative of his generation, is on the verge of reaching physical maturity. That is to be the climax of this first part of the Kruger heir's march through life. Later, all things willing, I hope to paint his progress through intellectual maturity, and then to examine with him the arduous way to spiritual completeness.

At hand, though, is the problem of ending this first book with the lad, our hope for the future, at the point of physical maturity, a whole physical being, grown, developed—capable of assuming the physical responsibility of reproduction.

When first considering this problem I felt that what I have to say now, which by the way concerns mainly the inclusion of so-called "smutty" or "lewd" passages in literature, should be left to a separate essay, plugged in, possibly, between two parts of the story. I've decided, finally though, to include that essay in this short part of the book, which has to do with the early activities in the Micros White Spot on this Saturday evening of the Danville Festival.

There are things that should be introduced into the narrative before the action of the evening commences. There is, however, little movement in this portion of the story. Dale simply sits in his booth impatiently, waiting for this night to fall.

This then is the action, my attempt to prepare you for the "evening" narration, to explain why (or rather to attempt to explain why) I demand the right to choose my material for it from all such that is available in life.

As I think about such matters, and I frequently do, my mind continually returns to dwell upon those frequent portions of literature now regarded as "classics," as indispensable parts of our cultural background, that were at first so violently rejected by the general reading public as being obscene, dirty, the product of depraved and diseased minds.

The classic example of public stupidity on this score perhaps occurred in the treatment of the Ibsen plays in England. Why should an Ibsen, a Joyce, a Proust, or a Lawrence be deprived of benefiting from the positive force for good their art produces? Why should their energy be expended in part, wasted on idiotic struggles with society for recognition, only for their efforts to be plumed and "special editioned" years after it is too late to do them any personal good?

Ibsen himself wrote a play ("An Enemy Of The People") on almost

such a theme, a play designed in part to demonstrate the utter impossibility of society's ever "catching up" unless everyone becomes mentally equal, which, of course, is quite impossible.

In order for literature to become culture it must fulfill only two primary functions as far as I am concerned. Those are the functions of reproduction and interpretation. It must reproduce life or some portion thereof, reproduce it in such a fashion that the blended whole offers more than the hodgepodge that life appears on the surface to be. The artist must faithfully reproduce some part of life, and yet with a design give this life an interpretation. The difference between a snapshot and a painting—that comparison can be likened to the difference between reproduction and interpretation.

A photographer would be extremely lucky, if he could find consistently in his lens, combinations of the elements of life that would adhere to any special form. The painter, however, possessing a superior sense of integration and significance, blends elements of nature into a comprehensible entity. Thus, it is the function of the artist to take various elements of life, and form from these raw materials a finished product that is something in itself, that exists alone, separate from the ingredients.

This is my first and least significant argument in favor of free choice of material for the writer: that as the task imposed upon him is one of construction it is for him to say, as the builder, what ingredients are best suited for the structure he intends to erect.

Literature, as a part of our art and culture, has a purpose in society. That purpose is the creation of positive good for society. In order to fulfill this demand fiction must, as we have said, reproduce and interpret. With proper choice, with adequate, comprehensible interpretation on the part of the creator, fiction can satisfy this demand upon it.

Allow me for a moment though, to say a bit about that society, for fulfillment involves, always, complete two-way cooperation. The finest scientific invention, the most important medical discovery can be of no use whatsoever without cooperation from the people for whose good art was developed.

Is that not so? Am I unconsciously deluding myself with some subtle fallacy in logic, if I say that literature cannot induce the public good, which is culture's primary objective, without intelligent cooperation from that public for which it is intended?

Society is not perfect; it is far from so. It is my belief that it can never attain perfection, that, indeed, it can never improve over the total time period. That view needs a word of explanation. The premise can only hold true over infinite time, or at least over the complete time period of mankind's existence. Temporarily, momentarily, we can improve our lot; that is our objective, should be our main function on earth in addition to obtaining the fundamental necessities—food, clothing, and shelter. To improve our lives, our neighbors' lives, our children's lives, that is our aim; in that pursuit lies our fulfillment as far as our spiritual existence as a race is concerned.

The individual component of the race, then, has faults, deficiencies.

These incapabilities in the individual multiply themselves into what we call the faults of society as a whole. It is toward alleviating these unfortunate faults in society that all thoughtful, ambitious intellects direct their energies.

These deficiencies are social in part, yes, but only so because they are to be found in the individual. Social evils are a reality only because they exist as malfunctions in the individual elements of that social scheme. Science largely attends itself to the mass of society in seeking cures for disadvantageous conditions. When a truth is discovered, a formula tested, the individual is offered the advantages it brings to society through the individual members of society.

We must never forget, as it is so easy to do in such considerations as this, that a human being has at least two existences—as a being and as a member of society. A marble contained in a box of marbles is part of the marbles in the box. That is evidenced by the fact that without individual marbles there could be no "box" of these playthings. And yet each "mig" and each "shooter" retains its individuality as a separate thing. This is true of the society in which we are each contained.

It is the position of the scientist to examine mankind in its various classifications in order that he may more easily offer assistance to mankind. It is the responsibility of the individual to follow intelligently his leadership when the leadership is secure.

Literature adapts itself to society, offering to do everything possible to aid the cure of social ills. Literature also needs assistance, if its cures are to be in any measure effective.

I am in constant fear as I write this that I will be misunderstood. I lay no claim to being an essayist; therefore that fear is redoubled. I want to state my case. I have rambled because I want to make a demand upon you—the demand that you fulfill your part of the bargain by intelligently offering the author, every author, every chance to improve your society. That is your fair, necessary share of the bargain. It should be considered as an obligation.

That is why I do not want to continue this story without my attitude toward the inclusion of so-called "filth" in literature being made perfectly clear.

Just as there are two parts to every bargain, just as it takes two to make a quarrel, so also, there are two sides to everything. Am I taking too much for granted? Am I violating logic by claiming that everything, everything has some justification, however slight it may appear at times to be?

Yes, everything has two sides, and only by considering both can we understand the situation. We cannot hope to rid our society of the basic evils until we, each one of us, are ready to admit that every evil has some justification, until we furthermore study the evil thoroughly from every angle, until we can see that it is not a case of something being wrong but of being more wrong than right. Inherent in all of us as physical and intellectual beings are all of the physical and intellectual sins and evils so aptly exemplified in the parable of Eden.

All of us are capable of committing all anti-social acts. Why then do we in general adhere quite well to the formulated rules of society, while particular individuals find themselves committing sinful, socially outlawed acts? Circumstances determine, to a large degree, the ability of the individual to accommodate himself to social standards. Circumstances, whether they be the sort called heredity, or whether they are environmental.

Circumstances determine our ability or inability to regulate ourselves to a proper place in society. How then can we go about lessening the number of crimes committed against the social order? The answer is as simple as the "ABC's": we must alter circumstances, improve them, if you please, better them in a way that will bring about a better accommodation to society on the part of the individual.

The ills of our society are diseases in the full sense of the word. Outrages against social order are communicable, epidemic-like diseases. They must be treated as such.

Science, on the physical side, has convinced us all that physical ills can be lessened, can be made less dangerous. The same thing is true, in a temporary sense, of mental defects, of maladjustments, of sinful bents.

Curable yes—but only in a scientific way. Physical pain has a source; so does social pain. It is at this source, and here only, that we can start looking for the remedy. Can a bad bellyache be cured if we simply avert our eyes from the food that caused the indigestion? Of course not, and yet most of us calmly expect to improve mental inadequacy in the social sense by turning our backs upon the crimes it brings. Can anyone deny the tremendous good that publicity concerning the cause and cure of social diseases has brought us?

A house cannot be cleaned by merely sweeping the dirt into a corner. The smelly sewer cannot be made less odorous by clamping down more tightly on the lid. Dirt, disease, sin, corruption—the cure lies at the source. We must allow sun and air to enter there.

If the execrable sins of society are to be cured we must realize their existence, examine their presence. Can medicine often develop a cure before the specific germ causing the disease has been isolated? Can society shed its ills without open investigation into their origin?

Let me then tell you frankly about Dale, his friends, his generation. Call them what you will, their hands will very soon hold the power. It is my hope that they will become more and more ready to see themselves as they are, to examine their defects and their deficiencies, to find there the scientific cure that mere strength alone can never affect.

JACK SHEEDY—A Beat

Another morning
and again the stale mouth
sweat-rot on skin
weary aching eyes

and oh jesus
but I don't know . . .

we must fight
fight alone
but must we?

walls are huge and grey with cement
and bruise lone-wandering toes
but
a company of men
a legion
striking as one
crumble mighty bridges
crush walls
into easy rolling plains
that undulate
and flux
do not rip
with jagged edges

and it's all a rhythm
all a beat
and listen again
you will hear it

there IS a beat
and I know.

I have felt in my chest
the pulse of it
a happy lilting
then soft and sweet
with dark sadness:
fog
white leaf smoke
night murk
roof dance of rain.
and there is a beat
a BEAT like THIS
but you have to listen
hard

it is there

the beat

listen

JAMES FRANKLIN LEWIS—
John Wheelwright, Pre-Romantic

Poetry and the art which professes to regulate and limit its powers, cannot subsist together.—Shelley.

Now that Daiches has announced the birth of a new Romantic poetry in England (Watkins, Treece, & Co.) and Lloyd Mallan in *Prairie Schooner* has used the word to refer to the poetry of the young Mexicans Huerta and Paz, it seems high time formally to announce the incipient existence of a similar tendency in the United States, visible to all who have ears to hear it The Afro-Cuban movement might be of the same mark. And I hear tales of Canada and Australia.

The fact that a return to psychologic health (I do not necessarily mean a reaction toward old forms and contents, either) is taking place in several countries at once, is significant of the world-awareness and inclusiveness which any Neo-Romantic art must have today. But it would be a great mistake to conclude that Romantic poetry in this country cannot be Romantic without imitating the Romantic poetry of England or Mexico. The Eliot-Auden-imitative fiascos of the past decade should be an eternal example to us of what not to do. On the contrary, in proportion as our tops grow taller and world-wide, our roots must grow deeper and acknowledge the need of home, not in the sense of the nationalism of politics, but in the sense of a nationality of culture. If we have any literary tradition in this country, now is the time to find it out naturally and draw on it.

To predict that the United States will probably experience a post-war literary revival will not, I hope, be too much of a surprise to anybody. There have been portents. The first volumes of Engle and Rukeiser in the middle thirties, to which they failed to live up, were heartening at the time. More important is the fact that during the past several years there have been occasional isolated poems with sufficient energy and richness to deserve the title of Romanticism: "A Winter's Tale" of Ruth Lechlitner, published (surprisingly) in *Poetry;* some of the poetry of Sidney Alexander; "My Grandfather Townley's Watch and My Grandfather Scott's Compass" of Winfield Townley Scott, published in *Fantasy;* "With Asking Hands" of Mary Graham Lund, published in *Prairie Schooner;* "The Topography of History" and "Men of the Third Millenium" of Thomas McGrath, published in *Modern Verse;* "With Diurnal Mathematic" of Kenneth Lawrence Beaudoin, published in *The New Mexico Quarterly Review;* "Romance Triste" of Scott Greer, published in *Trend;* and certainly a few more which I have forgotten or have not had the pleasure of encountering.

More important yet is the fact that about half the poetry and some of the criticism and reviews in the late and very sincerely lamented *Iconograph* were of this promising sort, and that practically all the poetry, criticism, and reviews in *Crescendo,* throughout its three years of existence, have been such. Think of the strong and highly individual poetries of Crews, Greer,

Kayko, Beaudoin, Moser, McGrath, Anderson, Harper, Foote, Lund, Peterson, and others, which there appeared.*

Not of most importance yet, though perhaps indicative of something, is the fact that Karl J. Shapiro, one of the cleverest pencils in America, has, in three of his poems appearing in a recent issue of *Poetry*, apparently graduated from his minute repertorial nose-length view to the broad inclusive vigors of healthy art; and that a poem like Norse's "Key West" was not too good to be published in a still more recent issue of the same journal. Perhaps we should take this as an earnest sign that that well-known publication, once a great factor in our national life, will not devote its declining years to utter uselessness.

One characteristic of Romanticism everywhere has been, as I have indicated in another essay, its farsightedness both toward the past and toward the future. For not only does it forge wide ahead creating new forms with each individual who attempts his hand, but it reaches back for inspiration and example not merely to the fad of a recent past, but to all the past, far and near, from the earliest up; and in that sense, for it is rooted, Romanticism is at once more revolutionary and more traditional than any Pseudo-Classicism could be, a non-paradox plain enough to have baffled many an erudite. I can imagine that a post-war American Romanticism will be to some extent derivative (as its individuals please) from the great Romantics of England: Shakespeare and all his great Elizabethan-Jacobean contemporaries, Herrick, Byron, Shelley, Keats, Tennyson, and lastly (and I mean lastly) troubled Hopkins.

This much is easy, and is the less important. More important, and at first trial more difficult, is to recognize an American Romantic tradition. Do we have one? Very decidedly, I think. We have Whitman, Robinson, Sandburg, Fletcher, Hart Crane (who did not fail), Lola Ridge, and—well, are we able to list Wheelwright as the latest example of these great? Not quite, I'm afraid, and for reasons we soon shall see. But if anyone should object that these American Romantics are too diverse in style and temper to constitute a tradition, I can reply that they could not constitute a Romantic tradition unless they were diverse, unless, that is, they were great individuals. In that respect, in respect of individuality, Wheelwright certainly belongs near the top, but unfortunately, though it is probably the most distinguishing characteristic, high individuality in itself is not sufficient to make a poet a great Romantic.

Before we begin our analysis of wherein Wheelwright does and does not stand as a Romantic example to us, one more word is due concerning individuality. Romantic poetry has always striven simultaneously for two very different and difficult things; first, it has striven for the expression of individual greatness (as against the "excellence" or "perfection" of the

*This paper was written almost a year ago. Since that time I have seen many more poets in many more magazines which could well have been included in the above honor roll. *Matrix* and *The University Review*, both magazines already established, have published a disproportionately high number of them; and three simultaneous and successful new magazines promise to change the profile of contemporary peatry each in its own distinctive way. Of these, *Interim* seems marked to lead the Romantic movement as I recognize the term; *Experiment* threatens to lift "experimental poetry" out of the realms of pure invention into creative art; and *Circle* would appear to offer a clearing house for the various American poetries, where they may influence each other generously and find a common direction.

Pseudocrats); and second it has striven (with varying degrees of success, but at least striven) to create a people's poetry, in preference to a poet's poetry. The realization of such a pair of ideals is saved from being merely a mad faith by the fact that Romanticism, when it arises, always arises in a moment, such as the present, of democratic revival. Some of the people who believe that the next phase of democracy must necessarily be socialism (and they may very well be right) will wonder how these highly self-assertive, fundamentally anarchic individuals, who of all people on earth detest levelling, can fit into the picture. I can only answer, and with some passion, that no democracy will ever be safe from the usurpation of dictators, literary or political, unless its components are highly jealous of their dignity as individual men. This union of opposites is quite visible even in Byron (cf. especially his "Ode to Venice" and "The Age of Bronze"), in spite of all his pose of wounded pride and faded aristocracy; and it is even more easily possible for us, who have the historical advantage of a century over him, to attain. The Romantic poet has always been a fighter for justice, even if writing about nothing more than an ocean endlessly rocking.

I have at my hand, besides a few other examples, the three volumes of Wheelwright published by Bruce Humphries: *Rock and Shell,* 1933; *Mirrors of Venus,* 1938; and *Political Self-Portrait,* 1940. These three slim volumes are about all he ever did, a sufficient narrowness of production, certainly, to stagnate him in the ranks of the pseudo-Classicists, were it not for a half dozen tremendous little poems that show what he might have become had he lived on if even to this our year. For poetry, real Romantic poetry, is a power and a flow and a generous giving, too ineluctable to be stemmed by critics, "craftsmanship," analytic self-consciousness, or even by wise publishers. His congestion of spirit, constipation, contraint, caution, careful spooning-out, overly-conscious cataloguing of effects, is in itself enough to exclude John Wheelwright from the complement of Romanticism, or from the company of Crane, whom he admired, to beyond the pale of Eliot, whom he also admired. But what was it that cramped him, what held him in?

There were hobbles on Wheelwright which fortunately will not hobble many of us, his successors. Like Amy Lowell, he was the child of an exhausted New England culture, and like her he was the congenital custodian of means and position, against which he rebelled, as she before had rebelled, though in a totally opposite way. He proves this kinship in the libelous and obscene poem, "Dinner Call," in which he served her hulking ghost to tea and saw her off. ("As the dust rose, her neck turned grey, like the stale ash of cigars.") Such hobbles will not be likely to constrict our knees, as they did his, nor will we, in the forties, be likely to follow the boy from St. Louis into the fresh arms of Mother à Backet; nor are we likely, if we choose to save our souls from selfishness by embracing a revolutionary ideal, to join the bitter and self-destructive cadres of the late Leon Trotzky. These three misfortunes, though they undoubtedly affected Wheelwright tremendously, both for better and more for worse, we may omit from our consideration. What else then?

As I have stated in an earlier paper, "there is a tremendous self-con-

sciousness today." (Page Tate.) "Science is partly responsible, with its emphasis on cold fact." (Page W. C. Williams.) "The newspaper is partly responsible, with its kaleidoscope of alleged reality." (Page Nims). "Memories of the Freudian decade are yet with us." (Page Patchen). "The struggle for economic survival, with its *idée fixe* of greed, is more to blame than we know." (Page Everyman.) "And then . . . we have still that ghostly fear of saying anything serious lest we will be accused of Arnold's . . . high seriousness." (Page Auden.) The "revolt" against the grey-necked ghost of Queen Victoria proceeds with unabated fury, even though that voluminous phantom was finally and definitively laid away in London thirty years ago by Americans. All of these astringents, including in reverse the self-consciousness of economic greed, puckered the lusty lungs of John Wheelwright, as it puckered the lungs of all of us, without exception, who began writing in the dismal twenties. If today to relax these constraints it is enough, and I believe it is, merely to recognize them, in the twenties and thirties it was not so; it was not enough.

Now in the train of these, and working through them, the American Academy of fugitives from literature consolidated itself in terms. Terms were laid by such indisputable authorities as Ransom, Tate, C. Brooks, Matthiessen, and Winters, (to name only a few), men with themselves no more than a moderate creative ability at best, in restraint of trade of the hundreds of healthy youth who did have creative ability and fire. And strange to say it worked. And all the "better" journals filled with this dry thing. And even a vigorous spirit like Wheels succumbed to the enclosure of Poe's walls. See his hungry little dwarfs in *Diogenes*, the last poems he ever published.

Omit, I say, the fact that his "philosophy" and "intellect" consisted in so great part, like Eliot's, in a dry leafing of happily-forgotten minor theologies, from which he wrought uselessly complicated solecisms. Omit explanation of such poems (in *Rock and Shell* as "North Atlantic Passage," "Forty Days," and "Twilight," in which he used a mechanically contrived (that is, not organic) symbolism, which had to be lamely explained in Argument, Margin, and Note; for this sort of thing has been called intellectual, and might, by the useless horror of it, exclude to us the fact that Wheelwright was really intellectual. Omit also trying to apologize for his entire book of miserable sonnets, *Mirrors of Venus*, in which he seems to have devised, exteriorly and in advance of composition, a superficial variety of that old form, instead of allowing the growing meat of his poetics to push it internally to natural shapes; for, even so, Wheels was not as mechanical as he seemed. Omit systematic allusion even to the *Political Self-Portrait*, his one great book; for it is still labored with Notes, standing as too mute apology for the fact that the poet had not achieved clarity in the poems themselves. Let us omit such Ph.D. practice, and concentrate on a few remaining broad qualities, which can erect this poet to an example for us.

No poet was ever greater the master of paraphrase; he reaches a high point of it in literature when, in "Footsteps," he paraphrases The Lord's Prayer and the Communist Manifesto in the same breath. His irony everywhere is supreme. Ideationally, no poet has ever been more three-dimensional,

has been able to talk on more levels at once, or, by punning interconnections of echoes, to summon more allusive and elusive meanings into the same focus. And no other poet, by this and other devices, has ever been able to achieve so great a density of packed associative description; hear it, for example in "Chelsea Exchange." But these devices in which Wheelwright so excelled, and which may very well constitute his claim to fame, are not, though most modern Romantics will employ them, necessarily essential to Romantic poetry. We will have great Romantics as humorless as Shelley.

What else then? What might qualify a modern Romantic poet? I think a modern Romantic poet will be able, as Wheelwright was, to use all vocabularies and all subject matters with equal ease and all together. He will acknowledge no limits upon the inclusiveness of his mind or heart or craft. He will be capable of a true intellectuality which allows the dealing of ideas, whether in concrete or abstract terms or both. He will be all these things indeed, but he will need to be more.

The red badge of Romantic poetry, as of great personality anywhere, is energy, the energy of spontaneous emotion, (a commodity which, if we unable to know it for itself, we may recognize whenever a Pseudo-Classicist, of the likes of Cleanth Brooks, cries "sentimentality"). This energy will normally manifest itself in several ways. First, in a tumultuous love of language for its own sake, and a generous giving of it, childlike, in long flowing presents and pennants of lines. Its syntax will be more rhetorical than repertorial. Second, and almost inseparable from the first, in the form of music. There is no important idea without its emotion; there is no important emotion without its music. In great Romantic poetry all the elements of music will be interblended in abundance. Melody, harmony, pitch, timbre, dynamics, development, rhythm, will all be there in abundance; and the greatest of these is melody.

I don't know how it happened that every short poem, no matter how crabbed and bitter, got itself called a lyric. Lyric is melody. Few modern poets know anything at all about it (because they never read their poetry aloud and hence have never developed an ear). Wheelwright, fine musician though he was, was no melodist. I know only one lyrical poem of his, "Lanterns of Time"; and it is lyrical only in the first stanza:

> *"While evening darkens, though the East mock dawn;*
> *air cool stone, sea-cold stone, stone*
> *blood-fevered lie where burning brush and jetsam*
> *(yet smouldering while turning tide-lappings yet*
> *tap them) were scarct upon azured sulphurous air.*
> *Dark earth and magnet West against the magnet*
> *East contract before the impacting sky*
> *gathers to itself all flax-coloured below*
> *ascendant Mars and, waning, the sickle Moon."*

I pass over as moot, whether or not he could have achieved such lyricism without reference to nature. I inquire only how he was able to cut loose

and do it. Do I not see the long flowing line of energy? I do. And I conclude that a too great preoccupation with minor technics prevented John Wheelwright from cutting loose into melody more often than just this once. But if energy is melody and melody energy, here is the superb paradox of Wheelwright, that he, alone of all poets I know, was able to show, almost throughout his whole works, that same tremendous life-impulse, even when trapped up into the half-inch phrases of his dry metrics. Earthquakes in a honeycomb. He was like the little boy who, given no wide lawn to race, romped ever more hysterically from one end to another of a small apartment, knocking over whatever was in his way.

Romantic poetry is the poetry of abundance, and not of scarcity, abundance of love, hate, discrimination, building, growth, intelligence, observation, music, idea, device, but mostly of enthusiasm, and of sheer living, and of language, life's little daughter. Wheels was that one freak who could somehow almost write the poetry of abundance within the framework, and the day, of scarcity. It is not worth trying again. And there is no need. One need no longer pretend to be little, in order to be big.

I can read that Wheelwright had a number of masters, Emerson, Eliot, and so on. But I care little for external evidence. I say that John Wheelwright was the disciple of two masters, Crane and Prometheus. He was the best of all the disciples of Hart Crane, in that he was too individual to write much like Hart Crane. And he was, in spirit, the last lineal descendent, to date, of that most human, of that most aspiringly Gothic, Faustian, creative, modern, of all the gods, Prometheus. For and about these two masters, Wheelwright wrote his two greatest poems. Science, in its present historic form, even when pretending to be constructive, is analytic; great art, even when pretending to be analytic, is constructive. If Wheelwright, writing in the age of science and John Crowe Ransom, pretended, like them, a too great analytic, I think he at least saw, as Goethe, Shelley, and all great Prometheus-worshippers in the past had seen before him, that not by repudiating science, but by completely absorbing it and its practical humanitarian assignment, into art, could the deadly analytic be outlived, into the built bridge. Wheelwright, in these two poems, foreshadowed years and poetry he did not live. I think he might have become a great Romantic.

"Every rebel, in so far a prophet breeds holy doubt and
skeptic faith in deeds' Melchizedekian Succession."

JANET JARRETT—Concerning Mr. Mundy

Mr. Mundy lived on Seventh Street. Seventh Street lay between Sixth Street and Eighth Street which was the only way Mr. Mundy could tell that it was his street. Otherwise the three streets were exactly alike; they had the same houses and the same trees and the same square green lawns. There was no way you could tell them apart except that Seventh Street lay between Sixth and Eighth.

One afternoon Mr. Mundy had nothing to do. He had a job. That is, he went to a large square building at the same time every morning and left the same large square building at the same time every evening. What he did between these times was his job. Mr. Mundy had never figured out to what purpose this was, but it seemed expected of him and Mr. Mundy always did what was expected—except this particular afternoon.

On this afternoon Mr. Mundy had simply stopped in the inbetween time that was his job and walked out of the large square building at a different time. He had nothing to do and no place to go because he was not expected to have anything to do when the time of his job was. Since there was no place to go he stood for a long time against the green lamp post that stood across the street from the large square building. Mr. Mundy was watching. He didn't know exactly what he was watching, but he remembered that other people did this when there was nothing to do. He watched the building until he became embarrassed because it watched him too. It had a hundred blank eyes in its gray front and they were all watching him. It embarrassed him because the large gray building was probably thinking more than he was, which is always embarrassing.

So, Mr. Mundy decided to watch the people. After watching intently for a long time, he found out that there was nothing to watch. They all did the same thing—not at the same time, of course, but eventually it always amounted to the same thing. They all had the same heads that were always hurrying ahead of their bodies as if they cared little for the close association. They all carried an assortment of bundles and satchels. These didn't matter, since they all became the same thing sooner or later. It took Mr. Mundy a long time to find all this out, but when he did he stopped watching the people.

Then there was nothing to watch except the taxicabs and the birds. He didn't like watching the taxicabs because they always went by before he had had time to watch them properly. He didn't like to watch the birds either because they reminded him too much of the people he had watched. So Mr. Mundy stopped leaning against the tall green lamp post that stood across from the large square building and began to walk.

Since he nearly always did the same thing, he began to walk toward Seventh Street. He got as far as Sixth Street and stopped. He thought at first that he would watch Sixth Street, but then he remembered that he had just decided that he didn't like to watch. So instead he turned down Sixth Street until he was in front of the house that was exactly like his—except that his house was on Seventh Street.

Because the house was so much like his on the outside, he decided to go

in and see what it was like inside. He knew that this wasn't expected of him, but then this was an unexpected afternoon; so he went up the walk and opened the door that was exactly like his door. There was no one in the living room, but he saw the chair that was like his only his paper was on the footstool and his pipe and slippers close at hand. Mr. Mundy didn't like this. They never were this way on Seventh Street. He always hunted for them there. That was part of the adventure at home after the job. He didn't like this; it was too easy.

Then he went through the dining room and saw that the table was set, and there were flowers in the middle. He didn't like this either so he went on to the kitchen. There was a woman. She was mixing something in a bowl. She looked a little like his mother and more like a girl he had almost known once and she smiled and asked him why he was home early. Mr. Mundy couldn't answer this because at the same moment he saw a child in the yard that was beyond the windows. He almost watched the child, but it reminded him of the birds that reminded him of the people and he didn't. Instead he looked again at the woman and at the stuff she was mixing in the bowl. He didn't like her and he didn't like the stuff in the bowl, and he hadn't liked the flowers on the table and his paper and pipe close by his chair; so he left. That probably wasn't expected of him either, but it was the only thing he could do under the circumstances.

Then Mr. Mundy decided that since this truly was an unexpected afternoon he might as well go to the house on Eighth Street that was exactly like his. He almost stopped at Seventh Street to turn down to his own house, but he didn't. He was not usually a curious man but this afternoon he was very curious. This was quite unusual because most curious people didn't have a job. He had a job; therefore he could not be a curious person.

When he did get to the house on Eighth Street he didn't hesitate; he walked right in the door. There was no one in the living room and no one in the dining room, so he went out to the kitchen. There was a man sitting at the table. He looked a great deal like Mr. Mundy. Only Mr. Mundy always shaved at 7:15 in the morning and this man hadn't, and Mr. Mundy's ties were always straight and this man's wasn't. Then Mr. Mundy, who ordinarily wasn't a close observer of such things saw that the man was drunk—not only drunk but rapidly getting drunker. Not having had experience in the matter, he wondered how long it had taken the man to reach this stage and how much longer he would still be able to lift the bottle.

After a few minutes in which Mr. Mundy forgot his resolution not to watch, the man saw him and motioned for him to sit down. He started to decline the invitation, but when he saw that the man was becoming very insistent he sat down on the edge of the chair across the table from the man. While the man was drinking he looked around for a woman like the one on Sixth street or even another bird-child, but they were not there. There was nothing there except the man and his bottle.

Suddenly the man pushed the half-empty bottle toward Mr. Mundy. Mr. Mundy jumped because he hadn't expected that. The man's eyes were on him, so he reached out a cautious hand and lifted the bottle. He smelled it

and as he was smelling it he looked at the man and then down at the table. For the first time he saw the gun. It lay by the man's right hand and the man's fingers kept reaching out to stroke it. Mr. Mundy didn't like this any better than he had liked the house on Sixth Street. Because he was a careful man he set the bottle down gently and then ran from the house as fast as he could before the man could call after him.

He kept running until he got to Seventh Street. Then he made himself stop and look behind him. There was no one there, so he walked slowly to the house that was really his. He walked in the door and through the living room and the dining room and into the kitchen. Then Mr. Mundy sat down and smiled slowly because he was alone.

THOMAS McGRATH—Elegy for Hart Crane

The fifth angel blows and a star falls in the bottomless pit.
The armless post card blows along on the wind.
One star comes out to unlock the gate of midnight.
In the drunken ocean the islands are walking in their sleep.

Walking the slack wire between dark and dark
A tree hiccups and lets fall blue eggs
Which opening let loose Simple Simon
Who turns a machine gun on the chocolate sheep.

And the sixth angel blows and a light of arrows
Feathered with eyes fall from the angry moon.
If help is coming it better be coming soon.
When Euclid dances, algebra falls at his feet.

FRANZ MICHAEL—The Phoenix and the Dwarfs

A PLAY IN THREE ACTS

By George E. Taylor and George M. Savage

The Macmillan Company, New York. 1944. $2.50

At a critical moment in American-Chinese relations, it is essential that the American public receives an understanding of the great nation across the Pacific with which it is not only allied in the war, but with which it will have to build a new future in the Pacific. The American attitude to China has gone through so many changes in late years, and the picture that our limited magazine, newspaper and other information provides, contains irreconcilable extremes. The heroism of Chinese resistance as discovered after Pearl Harbor and as contained in Pearl Buck's stories, Hollywood films and fiction stories centering around American heroes in fighting China has been more than matched by reports of inner Chinese conflicts, corruption, deterioration and reaction caused by the war.

None of these black-white pictures gives the full story, but in order to understand both the successful resistance and the immense problems of the great transformation going on in China, it is necessary to know something of the life and thinking of the Chinese people. What the American needs to know about China is not mainly sensational news of the military or political events or a new edition of translations of poetry or the wisdom of Confucius, but an understanding of the motivating social and economic factors that will have to shape the future of China. There have been many articles and books aimed at explaining Chinese phenomena, but better than in any academic discussion can these problems be understood if they are expressed in the lives of Chinese people whose emotions and fate we can easily follow.

THE PHOENIX AND THE DWARFS is a play that gives the average American, who has not had the benefit of special study or experience in Far Eastern affairs, in terms of the people of an average Chinese village, the story of China.

The two authors of the pay combine in a most successful way the qualities that make it possible to give an excellent factual and yet very human picture of the transformation of old to new, and the warfare against Japanese aggression which is part of this transformation. George Taylor has not only a whole academic background of Chinese history, he has also lived as a teacher and writer for many years in China and has been with the guerrilla fighters in the north during this war. His vivid descriptions of the Chinese struggle, and the discussions about it with his colleague, George Savage resulted in the idea of a combined effort to put this story into the terms of a play. The combination of the understanding eyewitness and the playwright has worked extremely well.

For too many Americans, China is still surrounded by the veil of strangeness or quaintness of the "Mysterious East." The play brings the Chinese problems down to very understandable human terms. In order to give these human figures the proper background of the Chinese political landscape Mr. Taylor wrote an introduction of 30 pages. This introduction contains a great deal of refreshing down-to-earth talk. It stresses the need for a different

American attitude toward China. It minces no words in revealing the mutual disillusionment that has taken hold in China and America. It is, indeed, important to realize the disappointments and doubts that have grown out of misconceptions, and have to be overcome in order to assure cooperation in future reconstruction. The unpreparedness of American military men who came to China is a striking example of a wrong beginning. As long as both sides look at each other from the viewpoint of a contract between Coca Cola and human fertilizer, friction is unavoidable.

George Taylor points out that the American-trained Chinese intellectual who has been the sole standard of judgment of China for many sympathetic Americans has never had the exclusive influence which we thought. He is going to have a less decisive say in the future. The military element which in spite of all theories was always an important factor in China, and the landed gentry of the Chinese inland are today more important than in the past, because of the Chinese retreat into the hinterland. The landed gentry which has given China its cultural leaders in the past and most of its officers in the present war of resistance, has also given her the unsolved agrarian problems of tenancy, usury and exploitation. George Taylor describes the part played by this group whose attiture will be of such great importance for Chinese future development.

The other great factor that he has pointed out in the introduction is the new alignment between the intellectuals and the farmer as it has grown in North China, where the play has its setting. In the past, the mass of Chinese farmers, so often exploited by the ruling forces, were educationally and politically illiterate. The student intellectuals who had gained from the West the ideals of the French Revolution and of the Anglo-Saxon political institutions had spent their time in academic discussions and empty political demonstrations. The story of North China as George Taylor sees it is the combining of these forces: the education of the intellectual to China's needs and the education of Chinese peasant families to membership in the nation. The peasants are the backbone of the resistance in North China; the students, once the "jeunesse d'ore", have become the leaders, practical administrators and shrewd and realistic military officers.

The Chinese in the north, and in all free China, have found the strength of resistance in themselves. George Taylor envisages a future in which we will have to work with the "Chinese Chinese." The Army and the conservative branch of the Kuomintang have become intensely nationalistic. They emphasize Chinese cultural tradition as against the superficially adapted Western ideals of the past. Western means will be used for Eastern aims, and Western assistance will be of the technical kind.

We hope for a merging between the growing popular movement and the nationalist leadership which will have to solve big problems: to improve the lot of the peasants, to organize the industrialization on which China wants to build her future, and most of all, to fulfill Sun Yat-Sen's promise of political and economic democracy. Whatever forms the inner Chinese program for control of the future will take we will have to deal with a China of an immense national consciousness, which we will have to accept on her terms without any vestige of the old patronage of which we were once so fond.

In the persons of the Chou and Fan families and of the farmers of a Chinese village, these ideals and forces come alive in the play. Master Chou and Tax Collector Fan are the local gentry and leading figures in the village. Their families have been powerful for generations and the land holdings have grown in size. They are satisfied with the order of things and have profited from it. Their children are to continue and to bring more wealth and influence—gained at the expense of the small farmer—to their families. But the younger generation is being influenced by new ideas. Their horizon includes China's national development and the international scene. The Japanese have invaded Manchuria and the fate of China outweighs the family fortune. So, if the older Chou son is going to study in a modern University and later is going to America, he thinks in terms of political progress for a modernized China and of international cooperation which will save his country. The younger Chou son distrusts diplomacy and believes in military strength. He joins Chiang Kai-Shek's officers' school against the will of his father. The daughter of the Tax-gatherer Fan is studying nursing and social work, using her knowledge in the village. There is a growing conflict between this younger generation and the old people and also between the young people themselves. Their ideas are tested when the storm breaks and the Japanese come to the village. Master Chou and Tax Collector Fan, who want to bargain with the enemy, are killed. The older Chou son, in his disillusionment in international cooperation and help, had tried to commit suicide but the events of the fighting and resistance lead him back to find out what part he has to play in reorganizing his community. The younger Chou son had learned that the strength of national resistance is in the mass of the Chinese people. He is learning through battles with guerrilla strategy of elastic, small scale, mass carried warfare that is saving the Chinese villages. The Fan daughter becomes the very symbol of suffering China. Violated by Japanese soldiers and brought to the very depth of dispair she finds in her work for the community the strength to carry on. It is she, who, in the decisive moment of discouragement and fear in the village, through her words and her example, gives the people the moral strength to carry on, to refuse to give in, to emerge stronger from every blow, as the phoenix emerges from its ashes.

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